

REMARKS

As indicated above, this is a Preliminary Amendment for the above-captioned Rule 1.53(b) Divisional application of U.S. Serial No. 09/973,743. This Preliminary Amendment is concurrently filed with the Rule 1.53(b) Divisional application.

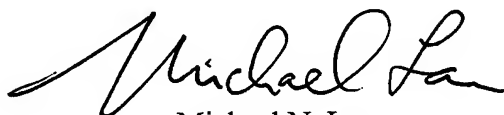
The claims have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention.

The above amendments are believed to place the claims in proper condition for examination. Early and favorable action is awaited.

In the event that any fees are due in connection with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP



Michael N. Lau
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 39,479

MNL/eg

Atty. Docket No. 011118A
Suite 1000
1725 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 659-2930



23850

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

H:\HOME\EGreenwood\MNL\01\011118A\prelim amdt